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A Corporate Culture can just happen... or you can make it happen!

By Jack Miller

Companies, like people, have unique personalities that include: integrity (or a lack thereof), an individual way of doing things, and a particular way of responding to competition and to customers. In other words, companies have a culture. The crucial decision in any organization is whether the culture evolves on its own, or whether it is carefully developed to drive a company to great success.

Either way, once strongly established, as all cultures become over time, it directs the way things are done, and is one of the strongest drivers of success, failure, or just plain mediocrity in your organization.

The culture of a company will dictate how a company commits its assets, how it responds to challenges and opportunities, what kind of people are hired, what kind are promoted, what kind are fired and so much more.

The culture of a company is the most powerful driving force within that company, just as it is with individuals and with nations. Think of the importance of the culture embodied within the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, and what effect that has had on how the United States has evolved. Culture is much too important a factor to just let happen. So you must think long and hard about what kind of a culture you want, and what kind of culture will help drive your company toward the goals you want to achieve. Once established, there will be some core ideas in your culture that should never change, but there will be other elements of the culture that may adapt over time in response to competition and to customer needs and desires. For example, as their customers¹ understanding of technology increased, IBM changed their culture from that of focusing on ³what we make² to focusing on ³what the customers need.²

As with almost everything that goes into building a strong, profitable, good company, building the kind of culture that will make this happen is not some strange, exotic art, nor does it require some special genius. But, as with almost anything else in building a good company, it does require a lot of thought and effort to build the right culture, and then a lot of hard work each and every day to reinforce it.

Jack Miller, Chairman of Successories, gives you more expert insights on Building a Winning Corporate Culture in this newest addition to the Power of One Library.